



NEWS



A publication of the Illinois Community Action Association

Legislative Update on Reauthorization

On August 6, 2003 ICAA, along with staff from ECICAA and PCCEO, departed on a two day Community Action Tour. The tour stopped in seven cities throughout Illinois: Peoria, Galesburg, Silvis, Joliet, Champaign, Edwardsville and Springfield. News conferences were held in six of the cities to draw attention to Head Start, CSBG and

dollars a block advocates around hard to convince the House proposal. I rejected President to move Head Start Department of Health to the Department

reauthorization and to focus on Community Action as an energetic, involved, vital movement. Several state representatives and senators were in attendance as

VOLUME 29 • NOV 2003





contents

Legislative Update 1-2
 Sen. Candidate Forum ... 2
 Grassroots Organizing ... 3
 The CCAP Advantage ... 3
 Peer-to-Peer Conference 4
 Friend of CA Helps 5
 New Software 5
 Adsystem Pilot Proj. 6
 FCD Registration Fee 7
 RCAP RECAP 7
 CA Tour 2003 Collage 8

Community Action OFFICERS

Mr. Dwight Lucas, Chair
 East Central Illinois Community
 Action Agency
 Danville, IL

Ms. Granada Williams, Vice Chair
 Rockford Dept. of Human
 Services
 Rockford, IL

Mr. Frank Schwab, Treasurer
 Illinois Valley Economic
 Development Corp.
 Gillespie, IL

Ms. Mary Lockhart-White,
 Secretary
 Lake County Community Action
 Project
 Zion, IL

Mr. Dalitso Sulamoyo
 ICAA President & CEO
 Illinois Community Action
 Association
 Springfield, IL

VOLUME 29 • NOV 2003

Legislative Update...

(cont. from pg. 1)

income people achieve self-sufficiency. The CSBG dollars that our members receive are vital to helping us achieve our mission.”

The Community Action tour also called attention to the LIHEAP program which is designed to help low-income people pay their utility bills. CAA’s are anticipating a very rough winter this year with the price of natural gas already more than 30% higher than it was last year at this time. Many low-income families have not fully recovered from utility bills they received in the winter of 2001.

The Community Action Tour culminated in the Illinois State Fair parade where staff from ICAA, Sangamon County Community Resources and Decatur Macon Community Action joined the tour participants in marching and chanting “Helping People, Changing Lives.” A video commemorating the inaugural tour will be produced and shown at the Membership meeting in Chicago this December. A second tour visiting agencies from southern Illinois is being planned for March 2004. *For more pictures of the tour, see page 8.* ■

Senatorial Candidate Forum

ICAA is co-sponsoring a Forum on Housing, Jobs, and And Poverty for U.S. Senate candidates. Other co-sponsors include the State-wide Housing Action Coalition (SHAC), the Chicago Jobs Council, and the Chicago Rehab Network, Illinois People’s Assembly/Illinois Coalition for Community Services, and Work Welfare and Families. ICAA members are encouraged to attend.

The United States Senate race for Illinois’ open seat is shaping up as one of the most competitive and closely watched in the nation. The Forum on Housing, Jobs, and Poverty is an opportunity for the candidates who want to be Illinois’ next United States Senator to make their positions and attitudes known on some of the issues that most directly impact people who struggle to make ends meet.

The Forum will be held in conjunction with the second day of the SHAC Convention on Tuesday, November 18, 2003, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Springfield Convention Center in Springfield.

Invited Candidates include:

Republican Party:

John Borling
 Andy McKenna
 Jim Oberweis
 Steve Rauschenberger
 Jack Ryan



Democratic Party:



Gery Chico
 Blair Hull
 Dan Hynes
 Barack Obama
 Joyce Washington

For more information or to confirm your attendance contact Al Timke at ICAA or Bob Palmer, Statewide Housing Action Coalition, 312-939-6074 or bob@statewidehousing.org.

SEATING IS EXTREMELY LIMITED, SO RESERVE YOUR SPACE EARLY! ■

Grassroots Organizing

The ICAA hired Grassroots Solutions to assist ICAA and its members to become more effective at advocating legislative issues. Grassroots Solutions will help ICAA with two important services. Based on the agreement, the consultant will lead two (2) training sessions (with open registration for membership staff and clients) and will partner with ICAA to develop a strategic organizing plan. The first of the two training sessions was held on August 18, 2003. Forty-four (44) individuals attended representing twenty-one currently drafting the strategic organizing during the second organizing training that is scheduled to occur at the ICAA's annual December meeting.



ICAA staff has begun the process of strengthening its organizing and advocacy capacity by trying to identify two (2) legislative liaisons at each member agency. These liaisons, in addition to the executive director, will be responsible for distributing legislative information and action alerts sent from ICAA to everyone within their agency. These activities will assist ICAA and its member agencies to accomplish goal #2 of its long range goals identified in its strategic plan. The goal is to increase the visibility of the Association and its reputation and influence as a leadership organization through aggressive communication and policy advocacy programs and activities. ■



The Community Action Partnership recently conducted a survey of Certified Community Action Professionals (CCAP) to discover the impact of obtaining this prestigious certification. Not surprisingly, the survey indicates that CCAP creates opportunities for those who have the certification — the bottom line — better jobs, more motivation, and higher salaries for CCAPs.

Make a difference at your agency by obtaining your CCAP. For more information and application forms visit www.communityactionpartnership.com. The ICAA Skill Bank offers \$500 scholarships to help with this process. For an application form and more information, contact Christine Westerlund at cwesterlund@icaanet.org. ■





Peer-To-Peer Conference Continues To GROW

On September 16th and 17th, ICAA and HUD hosted the Fifth Annual HUD Peer-to-Peer Homeless Provider Conference at the Crowne Plaza Springfield. What began in 1999 as the brainchild of Ray Canchola, a Program Director at HUD Chicago Regional Office with a total of eighty-five attendees from Illinois, is evolving into a multi-state event that attracted two hundred thirty-seven in 2003, including speakers and participants from several cities in Missouri. HUD honored ICAA and ICAA staff with two awards for having organized and produced the event for five years.

The Peer-to-Peer Conference has been the primary ICAA activity under the Association's Supportive Housing Program technical assistance grant with HUD's Chicago office. The conference has been built on the principle that the people working in the trenches, in the community are the best sources of technical assistance for homeless service providers. This principle resonates with the community action belief system and continues to be confirmed by the growth of the conference and the positive evaluations. The Peer-to-Peer Consumer Panel session, which has consistently been a Peer-to-Peer favorite, also reinforces community action principles that emphasize active involvement and self-determination of program participants. The Panel allows persons who have been homeless to instruct and inspire providers based on what they have experienced.

This year's conference was attended by national and regional federal officials, who were drawn by the conference's success. Most notable was Phillip Mangano, Executive Director of the Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH). The Interagency Council is a part of the Domestic Policy Council within the Executive

Office of the President and is responsible for the coordination of twenty federal agencies in their response to reduce and end homelessness. Mr. Mangano gave an inspiring keynote address, likening the effort to end homelessness to the Abolitionist movement that sought to end slavery in 19th century America.

ICAA President/CEO Dalitso Sulamoyo, and staffers Joyce Probst and Al Timke (together with representatives from the Statewide Housing Action Coalition) were able to meet privately with Mr. Mangano and Daryl Hernandez, the ICH Midwest Regional Coordinator for nearly ninety minutes. The ICH officials were familiarized with community action in Illinois and various ICAA programs and initiatives. At the end of the meeting, Mr. Hernandez proposed working further with ICAA to get input on homelessness policy from Illinois. Mr. Hernandez has initiated subsequent preliminary contacts.

ICAA and HUD officials will begin planning the 2004 Peer-to-Peer Conference which has tentatively been sited in Rockford to encourage participants from Wisconsin. ■

ICAA Candid Camera



Dalitso Sulamoyo, ICAA's President/CEO accepts Certificate of Appreciation from Daryl Bugajsky/HUD on behalf of ICAA for organizing the Peer-to-Peer Conference for the past 5 years.



Al Timke, Manager of Housing & Homeless Programs, accepts Certificate of Appreciation for organizing HUD Peer-to-Peer Conference for the past 5 years.



Phillip Mangano, Executive Director of the Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH)

VOLUME 29 • NOV 2003

“Friend of Community Action” Helps IL Network Grapple with CSBG Formula

Grey Warrner, former CSBG Program Manager for the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), and one of the recent recipients of the ICAA Friend of Community Action Award, facilitated the Executive Roundtable meeting held October 16, 2003 in Galena, Illinois. This meeting served as a follow-up to the roundtable held in 2002. The 2002 roundtable enhanced communication between DCEO and ICAA and resulted in DCEO adopting the recommendation to gradually phase in the cuts to help agencies prepare for reduced budgets. Though it was a short term solution, it did allow agencies to use special funds to facilitate the transition to lower CSBG budget levels. This year’s roundtable focused on three main alternatives to the current formula: 1) provide base funding or a minimum allocation to each county based on poverty statistics and redistribute the remaining funds by poverty formula. For example each county would receive a minimum of \$45,000; 2) or provide a minimum allocation to each agency and redistribute the remaining funds by poverty formula; 3) include a variable such as employment rates in the formula that could be reviewed every two years to offset significant changes to census data.

Mr. Warrner effectively and impartially facilitated drawing from his vast experience that includes both DCEO (formerly

DCCA) leader and CAP director. He balanced and guided the discussion to address the needs and concerns of agencies, whether they are losing or gaining funding. Nineteen executive directors representing the “winners” and “losers” of CSBG funding, participated in the roundtable. The directors agreed that the state should consider a minimum allocation and Discretionary funding should be used to help those agencies negatively impacted by the 2000 census remain in operation.

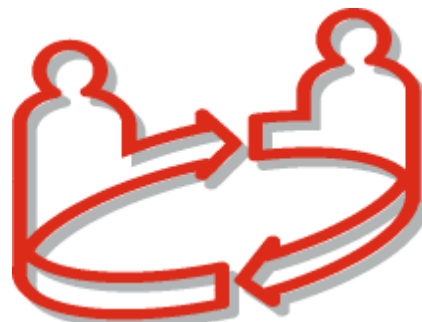
With every alternative formula, some agencies benefit while others take a loss. It is especially difficult to grapple with this issue within the context of all CSBG funding being threatened at the federal level. The days of guaranteed funding for community action have passed. CAAs have to mobilize to defend the real outcomes they help produce in their customers. This roundtable was an example of the type of mobilization the network must do to show the state the importance of this issue to the CAA network. While the final outcome is yet to be determined, the most valuable result from this roundtable was the process itself. CAP Directors were able to speak their concerns, understand the alternatives and take action by helping to formulate recommendations to the state as part of a body of executives rather than as isolated voices. ■

New Software Improves ICAA’s Services to the Membership

In 2004, ICAA will roll-out “PeopleWare”, a comprehensive event management software program. Some of the more visible features will be on-line Internet based meeting registration, the ability to accept credit cards and coordinated conference materials. As the quantity and quality of ICAA’s events evolve and grow, ICAA staff believed there were more efficient and effective ways to manage multiple databases without the duplication of work. Over the past several months, a hard-working team of ICAA staffers conducted research on a broad range of event management software, sat through many of promotional

materials, PeopleWare was chosen as the best software fit for our membership’s needs.

The deployment of this software will greatly enhance ICAA’s “behind the scenes” ability to better meet the needs of the membership at meetings by more efficient onsite registration, streamlined invoicing, custom reporting and overall improved event coordination. Additionally, PeopleWare will allow ICAA to more effectively track training participants, which will be especially useful in the FCD program. ■





Funding for Adstystech Pilot Project & ICADC Housing Collaboration

The Illinois Community Action Association (ICAA) and the Illinois Community Action Development Corporation (ICADC) received federal funding for their initiatives to assist the membership in developing an integrated client database system and to pursue housing projects needed in their communities.

Adstystech Pilot Study

ICAA was awarded \$80,000 from the Office of Community Services to conduct the Adstystech pilot software project. This software promises to provide a seamless integrated client database system for all agency's programs. Six agencies have agreed to participate in the project. They are: East Central Community Action Agency, Lake County Community Partnership, Rockford Human Services Department, St Clair County Community Action Agency, Tri County Opportunities Council, and Wabash Area Development. Each agency has committed resources to pay for the installation of the software and training and technical assistance on the new system. ICAA will use \$50,000 of the grant to purchase the software for the pilot agencies.

The pilot study will entail a comprehensive evaluation of the system to see if it meets the needs of the Illinois network and the reporting requirements of the federal and state programs. A significant part of the study will involve the entire membership. ICAA will coordinate site visits to the pilot agencies and even provide limited travel reimbursement to allow other agency staff to have hands-on experience with the software. ICAA will also host a forum during the spring annual meeting to give the pilot sites an opportunity to share and compare what has worked for them and what obstacles they faced — political, financial, technological — that impacted the implementation and operations of a new information management system.

projects in the communities they serve. This Housing Collaboration Project will use the \$25,000 grant to carry out a variety of technical assistance approaches to increase affordable housing capacity for six member agencies interested in pursuing projects in their communities. Those agencies include: Mid-Central Community Action, Northwestern Illinois Community Action Agency, Illinois Valley Economic Development Corporation, Embarras River Basin Agency, Illinois Migrant Council and Two Rivers Regional Council of Public Officials. Expert development and management consultants will conduct intensive training using state of the art computer equipment and the latest software. The consultants will also provide one-on-one technical assistance to Collaboration participants using methods that transfer skills and knowledge to community action staff. Through peer-to-peer technical assistance, the Collaboration will make use of existing affordable housing expertise in the Illinois Community Action network. The final outcome of this three-year project is the application or development of 150 units of affordable housing.

These two projects demonstrate ICAA's continuous efforts to increase the capacity of the membership to better serve their communities. ■

ICAA Candid Camera



Another great turn-out at the HUD 2003 Peer-to-Peer Conference.



Christine Westerlund of ICAA teaches Using Outcomes in the Super NOVA process at the HUD conference.



Frank Schwab, Ex. Dir. of IL Valley Economic Development Corporation makes presentation on Transitional Housing at HUD conference.

Housing Collaboration

The Development Corporation continues to pursue new ways to build the capacity of the Illinois network to do affordable housing

FCD Registration Fee Increase

The National Resource Center for Family Centered Practice which operates within the School of Social Work at the University of Iowa, has increased their per participant fee for their part in ICAA's valuable Family and Community Development (FCD) Training Program. The 12% increase went into effect in August, impacting the Fall Training in Chicago.

In 2002, ICAA managed the training program at a loss totaling \$15,384.73. This loss exceeded the DCEO funds allocated to cover overages, and the balance of the loss was covered by ICAA.

Reasons for the overages include:

- ◆ 78% of the total (\$900) registration fees ICAA collects from members goes to the University of Iowa right off the top to pay them.
- ◆ The remaining 22% must cover materials, Iowa's 8% administrative fee, all of the Iowa trainer's expenses (hotel, travel, per diem), any meeting space and A/V rental, the ICAA trainers' fees (who handle the third week of training) and coffee and donuts for 12 mornings.
- ◆ Fluctuation in class size causes revenue to fluctuate while expenses remain fixed
- ◆ Larger than 25 classes (sometimes unavoidable) which result in higher per trainee fees paid to Iowa with the same amount of collected registration. ICAA is charged an additional \$150 per trainee over 25 and an additional \$300 per trainee over 30.
- ◆ Added expenses, such as hotel meeting space and A/V rental, Iowa Trainer's mode of travel – airline ticket vs. mileage.

ICAA will continue to offer this important training that enhances agency staff's ability to serve their clients. However, in order to run this program in a fiscally responsible way, ICAA must increase registration fees to \$1050 with some still pending guidelines, such as two of the four annual trainings will be held at ICAA's facility at \$950 per participant. ■



POLY PIGS

Many water and wastewater operators have experienced reduced flow through their systems over time. The cause usually is minerals and other matter that adheres to the side walls of the piping material. This can cause degradation of the water quality being transported. It is quite costly to undergo a replacement project not to mention disruption of service. The installation of a Y-fitting (the pig launcher) can reduce both costs and downtime. An operator can run a number of "pigs" through the line restoring many underground piping systems to new or nearly new condition.

The Poly Pig is made of high density foam at the core, and polyurethane ribbing encompassing the foam in the shape of a bullet. The pigs work at normal operating pressure, and can transverse a mile line in 30 minutes. There are different styles of pigs available: the plain foam core, silicon coated, wire brush and stud covered pigs, including a transponder pig that can be used for mapping, locating blockages and /or breaks. The pigs are an economical way to maintain the health of water and wastewater systems. If you're planning a system upgrade or new construction it is highly recommended that you talk to your engineer about incorporating pig launchers to your system. ■



VOLUME 29 • NOV 2003

